**SCS Officials Policies and Procedures**

Southern California Swimming is the local governing body for USA Swimming in the Southern California/Las Vegas Area. ~~Officials not only conduct swim meets for USA Swimming, but they also assist other organizations, such as high schools and recreation leagues, to conduct their meets as well. Consistency of meet conduct throughout the area is critical to making the sport of swimming an enjoyable experience for all athletes.~~ SCS Officials Policies and Procedures are intended to maintain ~~this~~ **a** high level of consistency in officiating and shall provide programing and oversight of recruiting, training, certifying, education, and mentoring.

**Officials Program Overview**

The Officials Committee shall establish and publish the requirements to become an official in SCS. The minimum standards required to become an SCS official shall at least meet the minimum standards established by the USA Swimming Officials Committee, for those positions where there are national standards. The certification criteria should be accessible to all certified officials at any time.

The Officials Committee shall conduct, at least once a year, an instructional clinic necessary to remain a certified official. That schedule shall be publicized within the LSC, with clinics announced at least thirty days in advance of their occurrence. The committee shall be responsible for obtaining appropriate training sites within the LSC and shall ensure the clinics are conducted by well qualified instructors. It is permissible for room rental fees to be incurred by the LSC to conduct these clinics.

Any individual may attend a SCS Officials clinic; however, an individual may only serve as an apprentice at a meet if he/she has already met the requirements to be eligible to attempt certification for that position. **Are they saying that if they don’t attend the clinic an official can only be an apprentice?** The Officials Committee may designate certain championship meets at which apprentices shall not serve. ~~A person interested in officiating may stand on deck for less than 30 days to determine if they would like to enter the training process. After 30 days~~, **Individuals interested in becoming an SCS Official may work one meet (4 sessions) without registering with USA Swimming or completing the appropriate background check, APT, and other testing. If they wish to continue training, they must complete their registration, background check, APT, Concussion and USA Swimming Stroke & Turn tests.**

The Officials Committee shall provide all attendees at such clinics appropriate written training material, **if any.** A copy of the material shall also be available to LSC Associate Members without cost.

The Officials Committee shall maintain a roster of all currently certified officials. The committee also maintains, for at least two years, a list of all individuals attending SCS hosted clinics for the purpose of obtaining certification.

**Officials Background Screening Reimbursement**

All SCS registered officials are required to pass the USA Swimming Level 2 background screening to be certified as an official. To be eligible for reimbursement of this fee, an official must be actively working in the association **what association and who is reimbursing them?.** All certified officials ~~and apprentice officials~~ who work at least 6 sessions at SCS sanctioned meets (as recorded in OTS) in the 12-month period ~~beginning 6 months prior to the date of background screening and extending to 6 months after the date of screening are eligible for reimbursement.~~ **Why would we allow someone to work for six months without a background check? Has the SCS changed its position on this issue?** Request for reimbursement must be submitted to SCS within 6 weeks of becoming eligible for reimbursement. The reimbursement form is in the forms section of the SCS website. **Does this form actually exist? Has the SCS BOD been notified of this change? Has money been set aside to cover this cost?**

**Officials Education Travel Reimbursement – we already have a policy – we should insert it here**

~~The Officials National Meet Educational Stipend is intended to assist with an official’s travel expenses to work national level competition.~~ The Officials Committee Chair(s) through the Operations Vice Chair shall recommend to the Board of Directors which meets shall be eligible for reimbursement during the following competitive year (September 1 to August 31).

The meets may be recommended from amongst the following meets: Short & Long Course Eastern Zones, Sectional Championships, Futures Championships, USA Swimming Pro Series meets, USA Swimming Junior National Championships, Trials Class Meets, USA Swimming National Championships, Open Water Championships, and USA Swimming Disability Championships. **– let’s list what we have already identified because unless the LSC is going to provide us with more than $10,000/year we are not going to be able to cover these expenses**

Officials working a qualifying meet may not receive more than their actual expenses in travel assistance from USA Swimming and SCS combined. The Officials Committee shall recommend annually to the Board of Directors both the maximum to be paid per meet for meets to be held in the following competition year as well as the total assistance that may be paid for meets held during the following competition year. An official may receive ~~up to three (3) travel~~ **one** stipend~~s~~ in each competition year**.**~~, only two of which can be for meets above the Futures level.~~

Officials’ reimbursement will be distributed subject to the rules below. When the yearly allocation is exhausted no additional allocations will be made for meets held in that competition year.

In order to receive travel assistance from SCS, an official must meet certain minimum eligibility requirements:

1. The official must be registered with SCS for at least ~~six months~~ **12 months** prior to the meet and be registered with USA Swimming through SCS as an official during the time of the meet for which they are requesting assistance.
2. ~~The official must work a minimum of four sessions at the event for which they are requesting travel assistance.~~
3. The official must have worked at least twelve sessions at a minimum of four SCS sanctioned meets during the 12 months immediately preceding the request for reimbursement. Approved and Observed meets are not valid for these purposes.
4. The official must notify the SCS Officials Chair(s) of the intent to request a reimbursement upon acceptance to officiate at the designated meet, and prior to the date of the meet.  **The official must provide a copy of the acceptance letter for the designated meet.**
5. ~~Meets held within the geographical boundaries of PVS are not eligible for reimbursement.~~ **How many sectional meets, Pro Series meets and National level meets are hosted in Irvine. If we put this in the policy, we will be severely limiting officiating opportunities.**
6. ~~Completed PVS requests for travel assistance are due not later than thirty (30) days after the competition for which travel assistance is being requested~~**. Replace with our policy**
7. To request a travel stipend, officials need to complete the SCS Officials' Travel Stipend Application and submit a SCS Expense Report, listing the expenses incurred, to the Officials' Chair**(s)**. Receipts for all expenses listed on report are required. If driving to meet, the standard IRS mileage rate for cars should be used, and only mileage from originating point to and from the meet location will be reimbursed. The SCS Officials Committee Chair**(s)** will certify that the Official is eligible and meets all requirements. The SCS Officials Committee Chair(s) submits the names of those officials that meet all the eligibility requirements to the SCS Finance Vice Chair within ten days after the submission deadline for reimbursement. The Officials Committee Chair**(s),** through the Operations Vice Chair, will submit the report of those officials reimbursed to the SCS Board of Directors.
8. The SCS Officials Committee Chair**(s)** will notify any official not meeting the requirements. That official can then submit an appeal which will be heard by the SCS Board of Directors at the next meeting. The Board will vote on the appeal at that time.

Any SCS Official who has been invited to work at Olympic Trials will be awarded the same full share amount the Athletes are reimbursed. A recommendation from the Officials Committee Chair**(s)** will also be requested from the Board to ensure the Official is in good standing with SCS. **Once again, has anyone considered the budget when writing this?**

***The 5 Pillars***

1. ***Official Recruiting***

The goal of the Official Recruiting Program is to promote an inflow of new officials by engaging all existing officials and teams to participate in extending a consistent invitation to parents. The **O**fficials **C**ommittee must endeavor to communicate how rewarding it is to support the sport of swimming through being a USA Swimming certified official.

1. ~~Meet Referees that serve in that capacity at a meet, must conduct at least 1 parent meeting to discuss the benefits of becoming an official at 3 different meets. If you serve in that capacity at 4 to 6 meets, you must conduct at least 2 parent trainings. If more than 10 meets served as meet referee, conduct at least 3 parent trainings.~~ **Seriously! This is ridiculous!!**
2. Each geographical chair **(the Officials Geo Chair or the General Geo Chair?)** must reach out to at least 2 teams and work with them to send out an approved email blast to their parent membership related to the need for officials.
3. ~~Geographic Chairs and Exec. Committee to appoint a volunteer to monitor and promote recruitment and act as a monitor to ensure adherence to the stated policy by all meet referees~~ **The Officials Committee will establish a Recruitment Subcommittee to work with teams from each Committee to host parent information sessions at meets.**
4. Distribute an SCS created flyer about officiating prior to each meet.
5. ***Official Training This is outlining the certification criteria – we should insert our information***

The intent of the Official Training Program is to ensure that all officials are applying the rules with equal interpretation. Ensure that the quality of officiating provided to our LSC is conducted with integrity, consistency, fairly, and held to the highest standards of professionalism. Endeavor to secure feedback from host teams and coaches as to the level of service being provided and be willing to made adjustments when necessary to improve that level of service.

1. **Officials Committee** Geographical chairs will reach out to coaches **at the end of each season** ~~on a quarterly basis to as~~ for feedback on the quality and level of professionalism and service provided by the officials.
2. Meet Referees must show that they are working to use at least **one** official~~s~~ that was certified in the last 6 months if available to ensure new officials are not left on the sideline on working and honing their skills
3. The **Officials** ~~Executive~~ Committee will work to send out periodic links to various videos, rule interpretations, and informational material from the USA Swimming website each quarter

**Stroke & Turn Judge Training**

The primary function of all officials is to ensure "fair and equitable competition." The way a Stroke & Turn Judge performs this function is to ensure that all competitors comply with the technical rules of the event in which they are competing. SCS and USA Swimming have adopted the philosophy that all competitors, regardless of age (from the 5 year old to the national champion), must conform to the technical rules**. To begin training, an individual must reach out to the Meet Ref and request the opportunity to train at his/her meet.**

~~The minimum age to become an official is 18. Anyone wishing to become an official will start as a Stroke & Turn Judge. Training to become a Stroke & Turn Judge consists of studying the technical rules for the strokes and relays, working a minimum of 6 sessions as a trainee on-deck with a series of certified officials, taking and passing an athlete protection online course, passing a background check, and passing (80% score or better) an online, open-book, multiple choice test. The number of on-deck training sessions can vary by individual. Some trainees are more comfortable with one or more additional sessions.~~

~~To begin training, you need only come to a swim meet prepared to train. You should be in appropriate attire and be there at least an hour before the meet starts. Every meet has an officials’ briefing that starts anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour before the start of the meet. Report to the Meet Referee who, during warm-ups, is generally at the starting table, and let that person know you wish to begin training.~~

Prior to coming to your first session, you should print out the Stroke & Turn Training Packet **(what is this?)** and bring it with you. If they are available, you will be given a mini-rule book at the meet. If they are not available, you can print a copy of the pertinent sections of the rule book from a PDF file posted on the USA Swimming website.

* USA Swimming's url is [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org/)
* Hover over the “About” tab and select the Rules & Regulations link.
* Locate the current mini-rule book link and click that link.
* Once the document is loaded to your browser, print Article 101. That article contains the technical rules for the strokes and relays.

~~At any time you are comfortable with the rules and wish to take the test, you may do so on the USA Swimming Website. You will need to apply for the background screening (online process) and register as a USA Swimming Official prior to being able to take the test. Completion of the athlete protection training is also mandatory before being able to officiate on your own at a meet.~~

When you join USA Swimming, you will need to apply as either an athlete or non-athlete member. Most officials are non-athlete members, but if you are a Masters swimmer training with a USA Swimming club, you would register as an athlete member for insurance purposes. (You need NOT be registered twice. Members may designate both athlete and Official on the registration application. Only athlete coaches need to be registered twice.) **Add they need to take the background check, APT, Concussion Test.**

Clinics are offered annually in various locations, so plan on attending ~~at least one~~. ~~Training materials will be provided, as well as time for on-deck training.~~

**Training for Other Positions**

SCSoffers officials the opportunity to continue their training for positions such as ~~chief judge~~, starter, deck referee, administrative referee and meet referee.

USA Swimming offers 3 levels of certification: local (N1), National (N2), and National Championship (N3). Typically, two meets will be offered each year for evaluation and promotion to the National and National Championship level. **Do we really want this here?**

1. ***Official Certification Why is this separate from Stroke and Turn?***

The Official Certification Program shall provide a clear and concise certification criterion so that officials understand the requirements and necessary steps to advance through each certification level. The Officials Committee will provide certification for: Referees, Meet Referees, Administrative Officials, ~~Chief Judges,~~ Starters, Stroke and Turn Judges, ~~Timing System (CTS) operators, and computer (Hy-Tek) operators.~~ If considered necessary, the Officials may designate other positions as requiring certification.

1. Geo chair and/or Executive Chair respond within one week of receipt of a certification request with either confirmation of certification or reason for additional training needed
2. Requirement for all Meet Referees to update OTS on the USA Swimming Website within 2 weeks from the completion of the meet worked
3. Create and utilize a tracking form for new officials so that they can track each meet worked and once ready to request certification, turn the form into the Geo Chair for consideration.
4. The officials committee will maintain a certification criteria document that will be periodically adjusted to meet new rule and regulations or any changes to the certification process that USA Swimming passes to all LSCs for adoption. That certification document is not included in this policy statement document and can be found on the socalswim.org website maintained by Southern California Swimming.
5. ***Officials Education***

The Officials Committee shall disseminate all educational material received from USA Swimming in a timely manner. Provide an opportunity through special meetings or online videos, to further each official’s skill set. Hold a yearly clinic, whether in-person or virtually, to provide the general membership the opportunity to openly discuss and through open communication be offered the chance to ask questions.

1. Hold yearly meetings, either in-person or via virtual meeting, so offer the opportunity to engage the general membership to provide a platform that will more effectively bring a common understanding on how to interpret and apply the rules.
2. Meet Referee using at least 1 official that was certified in the last 6 months
3. Required testing test if the clinic was not conducted or an official missed the meeting
4. ***Officials Mentor Program We should create our own because this is not a good one***

Use the Executive Committee, the Geographical Chairs, and the general officials membership to ensure that all new officials feel welcome and are given the opportunity to work meets and advance as they meet the certification standards **This is very poorly written.**

1. Meet Referee using at least 1 official that was certified in the last 6 months
2. Geographic Chairs are required to maintain communication with all new recruits to ensure they are on track with gaining certification and are being asked to work meets.
3. Geo Chair to assign a meet referee (Mentor) to a new recruit so that they can communicate with that officials on a consistent basis during their training period. **What?**
4. Present an opportunity and open door for an official to contact a point person so that the LSC is aware that an official is interested in working at higher level meets. The Geo Chairs and Executive Committee need to identify those individuals and provide an informational and mentored pathway for those officials.

**Additional Responsibilities**

**ADMINISTRATION OF MEETS**

**Note:** Each certified official shall, when assigned, carry out his/her duties in accordance with current rules and regulations of USA Swimming and current procedures of Southern California Swimming.

~~Meet Director~~ **– why is this in here? This should go to host teams and not be in the Officials Committee Policy**

~~The Meet Director is responsible for carrying out the policy delineated by CA to be followed prior to the actual start of the meet per USAS Rule 102.9. The Meet Director obtains and coordinates the use of the pool and other facilities, the production of the program, and the availability of first aid, transportation, housing, and hospitality, as necessary. He/she is also responsible for obtaining the Meet Referee and Administrative Referee to serve at the meet. This pertains to LSC, and Committee meets.  The Meet Director may defer the staffing of the Wet-side officials to the Meet Referee only.  If it is necessary to have additional administrative officials (dry-side officials) at a meet, the Meet Director may defer that staffing to the Meet Referee or Administrative Referee only. During the meet he/she assists the Meet Referee as requested and serves as liaison with the pool personnel~~**. The meet host is responsible for obtaining the Meet Referee and Administrative Referee. The Meet Host may defer the staffing to the Meet Referee and Administrative Referee respectively.**

For LSC Championship meets such as JAG, WAG, JO, and other SCS meets such as Kevin Perry and SMOC, the host must submit a request for a Meet Referee and Administrative Referee to the LSC Officials Chair for the sole purpose to ensure that the request**ed** officials meet the criteria for the meet. If there are applications to officiate, submitted to the LSC Officials Chair, the Meet Referee may consider those officials.

**Administrative Referee**

**A SCS Administrative Referee shall have all the duties and authority of the Administrative Referee as described in the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations to maintain the “dry side” portion of a swim meet. The Administrative Referee in conjunction with he Meet Referee shall ensure that USA Swimming and SCS policies and procedures are followed in the running of a sanctioned swim meet.**

**Meet Referee**

An SCS Meet Referee shall have all the duties and authority of the Referee (as described in the *USA Swimming Rules and Regulations*) ~~and, if certified as a starter, may perform the duties of backup starter and stroke judge when more than one starter is not present on a given course.~~ **If we were to follow this it would mean that a Meet Ref can only work a meet as a Meet Ref. They can no longer work a meet in another capacity.**

**Starter/Deck Referee**

Deck Referees and Starters have the authority relative to start, stroke, turn, and finish. They have control of the swimmers from the time they are on the starting block until they finish the race. ~~Note: If there is no appointed Meet Referee on duty at the meet, the deck referees and administrative referee on duty shall together designate one of themselves as the Meet Referee prior to the start of the meet.~~

**Stroke and Turn Judges**

Stroke and Turn Judges shall perform their duties as assigned by the Meet Referee.

**Membership in USA Swimming**

All deck officials, administrative officials, and the meet director at ANY **sanctioned** Southern California Swimming meet~~, sanctioned or approved,~~ shall be a current non-athlete member of USA Swimming and adhere to all requirements related to background, athlete protection, and concussion protocol training.

**STAFFING MEETS**

Minimum Deck Staffing for SCS sanctioned meets

 4 or less lanes: 3 deck officials

 5 – 6 lanes: 4 deck officials

 7 – 8 lanes: 5 deck officials

 9 – 10 lanes: 6 deck officials

Double ended meets: 8 officials

You may reduce deck staffing during freestyle events as long as both ends of the course are covered